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TIMES-DISPATCH
Richmond, Virginia
August 4, 1962

The Cigaret Study Panel

An Editorial From the Winston-Salem Journal

THE ANNOUNCED PLAN of the U. S. Public Health Service to form an "unbiased expert panel" to study the impact of smoking and other factors is welcome news. The study, which hopefully will be comprehensive, thorough and objective, should go far toward removing the relationship between smoking and health from the realm of controversy, rumor and conjecture based largely upon differing statistical data.

A reassuring note in the announcement of the study program made by Surgeon General Luther L. Terry following a meeting with representatives of government, professional, health and industry organizations this week, was the statement that scientists who have already taken a strong pro or con position on smoking and health will not be chosen for the study.

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THIS PRECAUTIONARY step minimizes the danger that the study might be too much influenced by those who had already committed themselves, and felt under obligation to prove they were right. The matter at stake in this study demand an open-minded approach by scinetists wholly dedicated to a search for the facts.

The present wide divergence in socalled expert opinion on the smoking-health question is emphasized not only by the opposed views expressed at intervals by American doctors and the differing conclusions emerging from British studies, but also by the findings reported by Russian Soviet and Hungarian scientists at the International Cancer Congress in Moscow. The Soviet doctors, on the basis of their studies, appear unwilling to accept the contention that cigarette smoking is the major cause of lung cancer.

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THERE IS an urgent if not compelling need for the doubts and uncertainties on this score to be cleared up. There is much evidence to indicate that smog, climatic conditions, the over-all health condition of individuals, and other factors, possibly including viruses, are related to lung cancer. But if smoking is the major cause of lung cancer, the public ought to know it.

This panel may not be able to say with finality whether cigaret smoking is a cause of lung cancer, but the public and the tobacco industry have much to gain from a completely fair and thorough study by experts of all the factors in the development of lung cancer. Once the available facts are laid out on the table, the public and the government will have a basis for deciding what corrective action, if any, should be taken.

HERALD
Decatur, Illinois
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Moderation, Too, In Regulations

CIGARET makers face a growing problem in public relations, as the U.S. Public Health Service pursues a new survey of data on smoking and health.

Back in 1959 the service announced that "the weight of evidence implicates smoking, and particularly cigaret smoking, as the principal causative factor in the increase of lung cancer."

There seems little reason to believe that the federal government will in the foreseeable future move to ban the manufacture or sale of cigarets, even if the new Public Health Service study more positively links cancer to smoking.

A critical factor evidently is to what extent the individual indulges. Therefore the most the government would be justified in doing would be to require makers to include a note of caution on packages and in advertising.

As moderation is commendable in some aspects of individual behavior, so is it to be recommended to enthusiastic supporters of government regulation of the individual "for his own good."

RECORD
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SMOKING STUDY

The smoking public soon will have available the facts about smoking and its relationship to lung cancer. Surgeon General Luther Terry is appointing a 12-member study committee to delve into all aspects of the problem beginning in mid-September.

The committee will spend at least six months gathering facts and sifting evidence. It will have a momentous task on its hands because there is so much conflict of opinion. Even the experts on cancer are not wholly in agreement although the Public Health Service and the American Cancer Society point an accusing finger at smoking.

Regardless of the length of time the study and subsequent evaluation requires, the American people are entitled to the facts. There have been charges and rebuttals. For each item of evidence there is a counterbalancing contention. The net result has been confusion.

If smoking is a major consideration in lung cancer, we are entitled to know it, even though it may be damaging to an eight-billion-dollar annual industry. And if smoking is deserving of a clean bill of health, we should know that with equal dispatch.

Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/hsnk0000